

November 18, 2020

Dear Families,

I hope you and your loved ones are safe and healthy.

All of us at the Department of Education have been so proud to witness the joy of students and educators reuniting and learning together this year. We have been the only major school district in the nation to reopen our buildings. The benefit to hundreds of thousands of students is incredible, as school communities have reconnected in person for learning, growing, and supporting one another.

All along, we have kept health and safety at the forefront of everything we do. That includes carefully monitoring COVID-19 transmission rates across the city and, when necessary in response to infections, temporarily closing our school buildings and transitioning students to fully remote learning.

Given recent increases in transmission, we have reached a point in our City's infection rate that requires all students to transition to remote learning. Beginning **Thursday, November 19**, all school buildings will be closed, and all learning will proceed remotely for all students, until further notice. You will hear from your principal shortly about next steps for you and your student. Please note that this is a temporary closure, and school buildings will reopen as soon as it is safe to do so.

I am sure you have many questions, and below you can find some important guidance to provide some answers. As always, we are committed to academic excellence, community-building, and social-emotional support for your child—no matter where they are learning.

Devices for Remote Learning

Do you need a device, need technical support or to fix a broken device, or are dealing with a lost or stolen device? Call DOE's IT Help desk at 718-935-5100 and press 5 to get assistance.

You can also get quick help online:

- Browse tech support topics: schools.nyc.gov/technicaltools
- File a tech support ticket: schools.nyc.gov/techsupport
- Request a device: schools.nyc.gov/devices
- Get support with a DOE-issued iPad: schools.nyc.gov/ipadfixes
- Issues with your Internet connection: schools.nyc.gov/internet

We are committed to ensuring every student is learning 5 days a week. Your child's school will support you in remote learning if you currently don't have a device by providing paper-based work. Contact your school for more info.

Free Meals for Students and Families

All families and students can continue to go to any school building between 9:00 a.m. and noon on weekdays to pick up three free grab-and-go meals. No identification or registration is necessary. Halal and kosher meals are available at some sites, which are listed at schools.nyc.gov/freemeals.



From 3-5 p.m., New Yorkers of all ages can pick up free meals at 260 Community Meals sites across the city. For a list of sites, please visit schools.nyc.gov/freemeals.

Learning Bridges

Learning Bridges, the City's free childcare program for children in 3-K through 8th grade, will continue to serve families enrolled in blended learning. We will continue to give priority to children of essential workers, as well as students in temporary housing or residing in NYCHA developments, children in foster care or receiving child welfare services, and students with disabilities. Families can learn more and apply at schools.nyc.gov/learningbridges, and new offers will be made to families weekly as seats are available.

Early Childhood Education

3-K and Pre-K classrooms in district schools and DOE Pre-K Centers will be closed. If your child attends a program in a community-based center that is not located in a public school, or attends a family childcare program that is part of a DOE network, it will remain open. If you are not sure which type of program your child attends or have questions about your child's services, please contact your program directly. Strong supports are in place to ensure that these sites can continue operating safely.

Although we are temporarily shifting to fully remote teaching and learning for all students, if you have recently elected to enroll your child in blended learning, your child will be able to begin in-person learning after we reopen. I know that for many of you, this decision to temporarily close school buildings that we recently opened up will be disappointing, and I understand. But by confronting these challenges together, we can continue to fight back against COVID-19. And I am confident that before long, we will be able to safely reopen our school buildings again.

Please remember the "Core Four": wash your hands, wear a face covering, keep six feet of distance from others, and stay home if you're feeling sick. These are critically important steps that all of us can take every day.

We will continue to provide updates, supporting you and everyone in the DOE family as this public health crisis continues to evolve. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out to your child's school with any questions or concerns. We are grateful for your partnership and all you do for our city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard A. Carranza'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Richard A. Carranza
Chancellor
New York City Department of Education



**Department of
Education**

Chancellor Richard A. Carranza

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